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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KHARTOUM 001129

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF S/E NATSIOS, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND SHORTLEY
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AU](#) [UN](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: DARFUR: UN/AU PLANS FOR POLITICAL PROCESS SHOW
NEED FOR CLEAR U.S. POSITION

REF: KAMPALA 01171

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Classified By: CDA A. Fernandez, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) A July 19 briefing by UN Envoy Jan Eliasson in Khartoum and subsequent conversations with two UN staffers shed light on the UN/AU's plans for the August 3-5 meeting in Arusha, the role of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), and internal deliberations on the format for negotiations. At the dawn of the second, "pre-negotiation" phase of the UN/AU roadmap, the USG has an opportunity to push UN/AU efforts in a productive direction and re-assure both the political and military elements of the Darfur movements that it supports a focused UN/AU process. To do this, we must state our expectations for the outcomes of the pre-negotiation phase as well as the format of the negotiations themselves. Please see para. 11 for a proposed U.S. statement on the Darfur political process. End summary.

Eliasson Reiterates End of Convergence

¶2. (SBU) At a June 19 briefing for the Khartoum diplomatic corps, UN Envoy Jan Eliasson reiterated the key points of the recent Tripoli summit on the Darfur political process, including the conclusion of the first phase of the UN/AU roadmap, and underscored the necessity of the "convergence" of all international initiatives under the UN/AU umbrella. "We had an a la carte menu in the past," said Eliasson. "Now there is a menu fixe." Eliasson restated the fundamental elements of the final communique from the summit, emphasizing the importance of the August 3-5 meeting in Arusha, Tanzania of "leading personalities." The UN Envoy also noted the importance of "structured consultations" with internally displaced persons (IDPs), civil society, and traditional leaders in Darfur before, during, and after negotiations.

Arusha: Coordinate Rebel Positions

¶3. (SBU) The Arusha meeting would prepare the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) non-signatories for negotiations, according to Eliasson. "Our ambition is to have them coordinate positions," he explained. "And we cannot leave Arusha without an understanding of who will sit at the (negotiating) table." Eliasson acknowledged two challenges facing the

UN/AU effort: 1) Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) leader Abdulwahid al-Nur's continued intransigence and refusal to attend the Arusha meeting and 2) The way to involve rebel field commanders in the negotiating process. He did not articulate UN/AU plans to address these challenges. Eliasson's senior advisor, Pekka Haavisto, explained that the UN/AU planned to use Arusha to assess "where the groups stand." If Arusha demonstrated that all of the armed movements in Darfur were not linked to an individual leader, "then we're going to have to face that reality."

Eliasson Vague on SPLM, SLM Role

¶4. (SBU) Poloff asked about the role of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM)/Minawi in the UN/AU process. While welcoming the commitment of the SPLM, Eliasson provided no details on the UN/AU view of the SPLM's proposed conference in Southern Sudan and said that it would have to determine its role in the UN/AU framework. Recent conversations between the UN/AU and the SPLM on the Arusha meeting had been "positive." Eliasson said that it was important to recognize both the political sacrifice the SLM made by signing the DPA and the new reality on the ground, where SLM leader Minni Minawi's control over the movement had weakened and many of his fighters were resorting to banditry. At the same time, said Eliasson, the UN/AU needed to press the Sudanese Government to give Minawi legitimacy within the political system as the DPA remained "the basis" for the political process.

¶5. (SBU) Following the meeting, Eliasson staffer Yonas

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Westerland approached Poloff to "clarify" the UN/AU stance on the SPLM initiative. The SPLM should focus only on Darfur civil society, said Westerland. Poloff reminded him that during the last formal discussion between the UN/AU and First Vice President Salva Kiir on June 12, the UN/AU had asked the SPLM to focus on the DPA non-signatories and to leave civil society to the Darfur Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC). If the UN/AU had changed its position, it was important that they speak directly with the SPLM and should consider developing a memorandum of understanding to avoid ongoing confusion. Westerland gave no substantive response.

SPLM Conference After Arusha?

¶6. (SBU) A later meeting between UN/AU Joint Mediation Support Team co-chair Abidoun Bashua (please protect) and Poloff yielded additional details on the UN/AU view of the SPLM initiative, the goals of the Arusha meeting, and UN/AU discussions on the structure for the negotiating phase of the roadmap. At Eliasson's behest, Bashua and a colleague from the AU had met with SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amun on July 19. Bashua had told Amun that the SPLM should send a senior official to Arusha, such as Amun himself, and not just the SPLM Taskforce on Darfur. As the SPLM still planned to convene a meeting of non-signatories on August 6, Bashua had suggested that the rebel movements could go directly to Southern Sudan after the Arusha meeting if the UN/AU and the SPLM could coordinate the timing. Amun had said that he would raise both ideas with First Vice President Salva Kiir.

Arusha Goals Clarified

¶7. (C) The UN/AU hoped to accomplish three goals in Arusha, according to Bashua: 1) Facilitate discussions between the leaders of the rebel factions, 2) Develop common negotiating positions among the factions, and 3) Determine which field commanders were important to include in the peace process. He said that "leading personalities" meant representatives of all of the Darfur movements, including Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) leader Khalil Ibrahim. Bashua said that the field commanders wanted to have discussions with their

political leaders, not participate in negotiations. The UN/AU planned to tell each of the political leaders to bring one or two commanders, though Bashua admitted additional work would be necessary to involve the armed elements of the movements and said the UN/AU was considering a "follow-up meeting" after Arusha. Eliasson's recent discussions with Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail and National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) Director General Salah Ghosh had confirmed their support for a meeting of field commanders under UN/AU auspices. While the agenda for Arusha was ambitious, Bashua said the UN/AU were prepared to extend the meeting if necessary. However, Eliasson and AU Envoy Salim Ahmed Salim wanted the movements to feel the pressure of a limited timeframe to encourage them to be constructive.

Shuttle Diplomacy...Almost

18. (C) Bashua said that the UN/AU were involved in internal discussions on the structure of the negotiation phase of the roadmap. Salim and Haavisto advocated for the "shuttle diplomacy" approach: after Arusha, the UN/AU would engage topical specialists on power-sharing, wealth-sharing, and security arrangements to review the demands of the rebel movements within the context of the DPA. The UN/AU would then discuss these demands with the Sudanese Government and build consensus between the movements and the Government. Eliasson, however, felt that he was under pressure from the UN Security Council, and the U.S. in particular, to begin formal negotiations as soon as possible. He favored a late-August start date for final talks, which could then adjourn if necessary to allow for "shuttle diplomacy."

Comment

19. (C) While the UN/AU has identified the key elements of a

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successful political process for Darfur, these have not yet solidified into a detailed, tactical plan to bring the non-signatories to an agreement with the Government. Contacts throughout the region indicate that the rebel movements are looking to the U.S. as a guarantor of the UN/AU process and want clarification of the U.S. position (reftel).

The UN/AU need a clear understanding of the U.S. view of the negotiating format itself. At the beginning of the second, "pre-negotiations" phase of the roadmap, the USG has an opportunity to state its expectations for the second and third phases of the negotiating process. Important outcomes would include: 1) A UN/AU action plan to repair the rift between the armed field commanders and the political leaders of the Darfur rebel movements, 2) A written co-pinhadin of the

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productive direction, hold the UN/AU accountable for specific outcomes, and encourage the UN/AU to avoid formal talks and unrealistic timelines that risk resulting in a weak agreement. Such a statement would also re-assure the rebel groups of continued U.S. backing for the UN/AU while ensuring that important rebel elements, such as the field commanders, are involved in the process. A statement should be accompanied by direct, high-level contact between the USG and the UN/AU to provide additional detail on U.S. views for the remaining two phases of the UN/AU roadmap. End comment.

Proposed U.S. Statement on UN/AU Political Process

11. (SBU) The following is the proposed text for a statement of U.S. policy on the Darfur political process:

(Begin text)

The United States welcomes the completion of the first phase

of the Joint AU-UN Road-Map for the Darfur Political Process and commends the African Union and the United Nations for their efforts to bring lasting peace to Darfur.

The pre-negotiation phase of the road-map is a crucial step in laying the foundation for UN/AU-led peace negotiations between the Government of National Unity and the Darfur movements. The United States anticipates three critical elements to the pre-negotiation phase: 1) The United States urges the UN and AU to develop an action plan for facilitating dialogue among the Darfur movements' political leaders and military commanders. The rift between these groups can undermine the road to peace and repairing this rift is a pre-requisite to negotiations. 2) The United States calls on the AU and UN to compile, as soon as possible, a written set of positions on the issues of power-sharing, wealth-sharing, and security arrangements from the Darfur movements. 3) The United States urges the AU and the UN to develop a tool for assessing the demands and the political affiliations of internally displaced persons, civil society, and traditional leaders in Darfur. The views of these groups must be included in the Darfur peace process, and a concrete--versus anecdotal--assessment of their positions must be completed before negotiations can begin.

The United States does anticipate the need to convene final talks after the essential elements of the pre-negotiation phase have been completed. On the basis of the Darfur Peace Agreement and in consultation with the Sudan Liberation Movement, the United States supports UN and AU "shuttle diplomacy" to negotiate mutually acceptable additions to the DPA between the Darfur movements and the Government of National Unity. While defusing the Darfur conflict is of the utmost urgency, the United States seeks a sustainable and lasting agreement and views the "shuttle diplomacy" approach, rather than lengthy and formal negotiations, as the most effective way to proceed. Brief formal talks could finalize the agreed outcomes of these negotiations.

The United States reiterates its support for the United Nations and African Union as they lead the political process

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to resolve the Darfur crisis.

(End text)

¶12. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.
FERNANDEZ